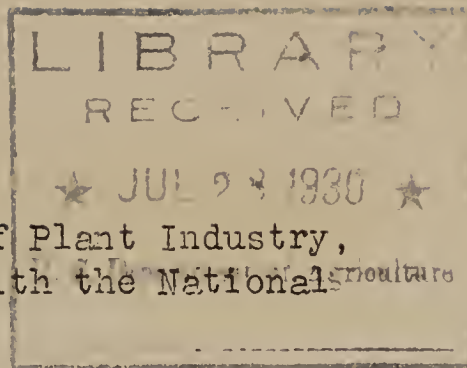


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THE GARDEN CALENDAR.



A radio talk by W. R. Beattie, horticulturist, Bureau of Plant Industry, delivered through WRC and 34 other radio stations associated with the National Broadcasting Company, Tuesday, July 15, 1930.

Last Tuesday in my Garden Calendar, I told you about some of the fine home gardens that I found on my trip through Virginia, Maryland, and Southern Pennsylvania. The size of these gardens varied from small plots in the backyards of townspeople to large farm gardens containing one-half acre, or in some cases an acre or more. The small gardens were mostly of the old style with the crops planted in raised beds, and worked entirely by hand, while the large gardens were laid out for horse cultivation. Practically the same crops were grown in all of the gardens, the main difference being that larger quantities of each were grown in the larger gardens.

I presume that there is no other section in the whole country where the home vegetable garden is given the attention that it is in the territory included in my trip. One point in the care of these gardens that I want to pass on to you today is the way in which their owners have provided for a continuous supply of the various crops. In certain of the larger gardens, I observed as many as four or five different plantings of sweet corn; three or four plantings of beans; an early and late crop of cabbage; early and late potatoes; two plantings of beets and carrots. In many cases preparations were being made for planting a considerable number of fall crops, although it was yet too early for the actual planting of many of the fall crops.

I do not want to bore you with advice on gardens, but I do feel that it is highly important that every farm family have a good fall garden. I am not so much concerned about the folks living in the towns, because they can usually go to the corner grocery and get their supply of fresh vegetables, or better still, drive out to the farms and buy fresh vegetables direct from the growers. It is seldom, however, that people living on farms can go to the store every time they need fresh vegetables, and, therefore, they should have them growing in their own gardens. Among the crops that I wish to suggest for the fall garden are beans, especially snap beans, and it may not be too late in some sections for the planting of Lima beans. It is about time to be sowing turnips in the northern part of the country, and turnips can be sown as late as the 1st of October in the extreme southern part. It is not too late in many sections for setting a few tomato plants in order to have tomatoes right up to frost time. It is about the last call in the northern part of the country for setting celery and late cabbage, in fact, it is now too late in some sections. Carrots and beets can both be grown in many parts of the country for fall use and for storage; the difficulty lies in getting them started during the dry hot weather. Lettuce and spinach should be planted a little later, also Chinese radishes, and in some sections a late crop of English peas can be grown.

In my travels, I observed that the gardens were comparatively free from weeds, also that most of the space in the garden was being occupied. My suggestion is that if you do not plant crops on all of your garden space during

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the remainder of the season that you do plant soybeans, rye, or something that will keep the ground occupied and produce a little organic matter to enliven and enrich the soil.

Those of you who live in the dry-land or Northern Great Plains section will soon be thinking about plowing under manure and other material, and getting the land in shape for next year's garden.

Control of diseases and insect pests is one of the real problems for the gardener. Right now the Mexican bean beetle is playing havoc with the bean crop in home gardens in many sections, and its control is absolutely essential, if you expect to have any beans. Such leaf diseases as occur on tomatoes, melons, cucumbers, and many other garden crops can be largely controlled by spraying, or I should say, can be prevented by spraying with Bordeaux mixture. The Department has a very good bulletin on the diseases and insects of garden vegetables. It is Farmers' Bulletin No. 1371, and I shall be glad to send you a copy, also bulletins on special garden crops.

Owing to the drought throughout the eastern portion of the country, it is going to be difficult to start late gardens. I have found that sprinkling the seeds with a little water after they are placed in the ground and just before you cover them, then firming the soil over them will aid in getting them started. It is not advisable to soak the seeds in water, then place them in dry, hot soil, but adding the water after the seeds are dropped, then covering them with the dry soil works fairly well.

I have carried some of my crops through the drought period in very good shape by making little furrows alongside of the rows of celery, beans, beets, onions, etc., and running a small stream of water from the garden hose. About one watering a week will keep the plants in good growing condition. I never start sprinkling any of my crops unless I intend frequent watering, as occasional light sprinklings will do more harm than good.

I saw some gardens on my trip that were particularly ruined by the dry weather, while others, often on adjoining farms, were in very fair condition. For my own part, I am going to practice what I preach and will keep right on planting the various garden crops that are suited for growing during the fall months.

Now, I hope that I have not tired you out on this subject of home gardens, but I feel that it is of such great importance to those of you who live on farms that I have dwelt upon it even longer than I intended, but I hope that after what I have said you will take stock of what is now growing in your home garden, and then, if possible, make additional plantings so as to maintain a variety of fresh vegetables for use during the fall and early winter.